Hope for Today – August 31, 2021

Presented by Clifford Phipps

1. What is the rapture of the church?
2. What evidence is there that the rapture is pre-tribulational?
3. How do you respond to knowing that the rapture could occur at any moment?

1 Peter 1:3

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, NASU

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(Heb 6:19)

1. **What is the Rapture of the Church?**

The rapture is an event described in the bible when Jesus personally appears in the clouds to gather His church together to give them their glorified bodies and to take them to heaven to be with Him.

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1 Thess 4:13-18

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep.

**16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.**

**17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.**

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words. NASU

**When will the Rapture occur?**

The timing of the Rapture is unknown.

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**What causes the Rapture to occur?**

According to Rom. 11:25, the Rapture of the Church can occur when the last Gentile is added to the Church.

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**Who is the Rapture for?**

The Rapture is promised only to the true believers in the Church Era. Only those people that have believed the gospel from the time of Pentecost until the moment of the Rapture will take part in the Rapture of the Church.

**Will some “Christians” miss the rapture? Yes, due to unbelief**.

Matt 25:1-13

1 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom.

2 "Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent.

3 "For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them,

4 but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps.

5 "Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep.

6 "But at midnight there was a shout, 'Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' 7 "Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps.

8 "The foolish said to the prudent, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'

9 "But the prudent answered, 'No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.'

10 "And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the **door was shut**.

11 "Later the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, lord, open up for us.'

12 "But he answered, 'Truly I say to you, I do not know you.'

13 "**Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour**. NASU

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(Eph 1:13)

**What is the purpose of the Rapture?**

1. **To provide the church with Glorified Bodies**

(Phil 3:20-21, 1 Cor 15:51-53)

1. **To protect the church from the tribulation period or the wrath that is to come**

(1 Thess 1:6)

**Let’s talk about the timing of the Rapture of the Church.**

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**What is the Tribulation Period?**

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(Matt 24:21)

1. **Evidence that the rapture is pre-tribulational**
2. Daniel 9:24 tells us that the 70th seven is clearly defined for Israel.

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1. Paul describes a pre-tribulational rapture in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-10.

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2 Thess 2:1-10

1 Now we request you, brethren, with regard to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him,

2 that you not be quickly shaken from your composure or be disturbed either by a spirit or a message or a letter as if from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

3 Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the departure comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction,

4 who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.

5 Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?

6 And you know what restrains him now, so that in his time he will be revealed.

7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.

8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming;

9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,

10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. NASU

1. The coming of Jesus for His Church is imminent. Scripture does not place any major events between the rapture and today in the bible. (Mt 24:36, 25:13; Lk 21:34-36; Rom 8:22; 1Cor 1:7-8; Phil 3:20; 1Thes 1:10, 2:19, 3:13,4:15-17, 5:23; 2Thes 2:1-3; 1Tim 6:14; 2Tim 4:8 ;Tit 2:13; Heb 9:28, 10:37; James 5:7-8; 1Pet 1:13; 1 Jn 2:28, Jude 21, Rev 3:11, 5:1, 22:7, 12, 20)

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1. Referring to the signs that Jesus had provided to His disciples to alert believers that His return was soon, said “When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.” (Lk 21:28)

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1. Jesus said in Luke 21:36 "But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape **all** these things that are about to take place…

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1. The Church is to be excluded from trials on earth. (Matt 16:18; Rom 5:9; 2 Pet 2:4-9)

(1 Thess 5:9-10, 1 Thess 1:6, Rev 3:10)

1. John describes a Pre-Tribulational Rapture

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(Rev 4:1-2)

1. Revelation 5:9-10 clearly happens before the Antichrist is revealed.

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**Sequence of events from today to the beginning of the tribulation period.**

1. The full number of the gentiles come in. (Rom 11:25)
2. The rapture occurs (1 Cor 15:1-4, 1Thes 4:13-18)
3. The believers arrive at the throne room (Rev 4)
4. The Lamb takes the scroll from the Father (Rev 5)
5. The Lamb breaks the first seal – rider on the white horse (Rev 6:1-2)
6. The anti-Christ establishes world authority (Rev 13:1-10)
7. The anti-Christ enforces a world-wide peace treaty with Israel (Dan 9:27)
8. The tribulation (70th seven of Daniel) is initiated.

Each event is dependent upon the previous event.

1. **How do you respond to knowing that the rapture could occur at any moment?**
   * Realize that we don’t belong here. (Phil 3:20)
   * Be on alert. (Lk. 21:25-36; Mt. 24:36-44) Don’t know the day or the hour, watch for the signs. Continue to watch for the signs that Jesus talked about. Watch the news with a rapture ready attitude.
   * Realize that based on signs that we are seeing in the news today, you most likely will be part of that group that doesn’t see death and instead, will be immediately transformed when the rapture occurs and immediately be taken by Jesus to heaven.

* + Tell as many people that you can about Jesus. Especially those that think they are saved in the church. Make sure they understand the Gospel and make sure that their faith is a genuine faith, based on God’s word.

(1 Peter 3:15)

* + Work on increasing your faith.

(1 Peter 1:7-8)

* + Now that you know this information, comfort one another with these words.